THE POCAHONTAS TIMES

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CALVIN W. PRICE, EDITOR.

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There used to be a covered bridge at Marlinton across the Greenbrier River. It was built about 1851, and it was the sop to Carebus who was guarding the treasury when great turnpike schemes were being carried out in Richmond. This was one of the bridges which came through the Civil War. Armies marched back and forth over the bridge and it figured in battles and retreats, but as it happened the critical occasions did not occur in time of flood except once, and that was during Averell's raid, and then they kindled a fire that my grandma Price was able to scatter.

Before it was torn down, I went across it one morning and saw an old Confed examining the walls. It was my very good friend James Schisler,

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Before it was torn down, I went across it one morning and saw an old Confed examining the walls. It was my very good friend James Schisler, of Greenbrier County. He said he was looking for the loop hole that he had used during the war.

As near as I can figure it out there was but one time that they had a bat tle here at Marlinton, during the Civil War, though it was for months at a time a fortified camp. And I never understood the nature of the controversy at that time, and I am pretty sure that none of the local people here on either side ever understood it. All they knew was that there were soldiers stationed at the bridge and suddenly the bottom was full of blue coats and and there was much firing and cavalry charging and an awful racket, and the Confederates retreated west and south, and the yankees went away.

Dr. George B. Moffett was here that day. He was the father of the president of the Standard Oil Company of Indiana, the one that the umpire fined twenty-nine million dollars. That president said that the fine did not hurt so much as the attorney's fees that the company had to pay.

Dr. Moffett withdrew that day. In telling about it afterwards he said: "Well, I thought I had a fairly fleet

president of the Standard Oil Company of Indiana, the one that the umpire fined twenty-nine million dollars. That president said that the fine did not hurt so much as the attorney's fees that the company had to pay.

Dr. Moffett withdrew that day. In telling about it afterwards he said: "Well, I thought I had a fairly fleet horse, but with all those bullets flying around me, it seemed like Gizzard could not run at all."

Col. Gratton Miller was here that day. He told us children about it forty odd years ago. He said that he ran through the bridge and got so much dust in his lungs that he could not run and he dared not stop. "Why could you not stop?" "Because I had to run or get shot in the back." So it is to be presumed that he was moving rapidly.

But after so long a time I think I have been able to figure out what the fuss was about, and if you will bear with me as long as the tale unfolds, I will try to pass it on to you. That is the reason that I would rather write than speak. In writing I am not interrupted and I do not suffer from the sight of weariness.

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It will be remembered that the war broke out in 1861, and that for a time Pocahontas county was the objective of both armies. That is the glorious year in the history of this county. The strength of the militia just before the war was six hundred and fifty, and yet before June 10th, over five hundred had entered the Confederate army from Pocahontas county. Robert E. Lee spent something like two months here in the summer of 1861, between Huntersville and Linwood. His exact whereabouts during that time can be traced by the letters that he wrote during his stay in this county.

There had been considerable fighting in Tygarts Valley as the confederates fell back before McClellan and Rosecrans. The federals dug in at Elkwater, and Lee fortified the passes through Valley Mountain and Middle Mountain. The federals had fortified White Top of Cheat Mountain on the Staunton & Parkersburg Turnpike. Lee tried to get Loring's

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It is pretty plain reading between the lines that Lee was worried about not having word from Loring about whether he had got across or not, and sent Major John A. Washington with a handful of men to reconnoiter and see if he saw a confederate army marching up the river by some hook or crook. And Washington kept looking and looking in vain for such a force and got so near the fortifications in trying to discover the lost army that he was fired upon and killed.

Then Lee pulled up and left in the fall and the troops settled down for the winter. The federals were at Beverly, and Huttonsville. White Top and Elkwater

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Then Lee pulled up and left in the fall and the troops settled down for the winter. The federals were at Beverly, and Huttonsville. White Top and Elkwater. The confederates were at Bartow, Top of Allegheny, Monterey, Huntersville and Marlins Bottom. On the Marlins Bottom and Huttonsville Turnpike the confederates had fallen back to this place and farther east. The federals had been stopped in two severe battles on the Staunton & Parkersburg Turnpike, one fought at the fording of the East Fork of Greenbrier River, on October 31, 1861, and one at the Top of Allegheny on December 13, 1861. In addition to that there had been two skirmishes at Travelers Repose, at that same ford, one October 3, 1861, and one December 12, 1861. We had six battles in that one year in Pocahontas County. That is counting the battle of January 3, 1862,

At Huttonsville that winter the 25th Ohio was camped, and with them was Major George Webster of that regiment. General Milroy was in command of the forces at that time and he conceived a plan to let the young major have a chance to lead a small army into the Greenbrier Valley by the way of the Old Field Fork of Elk to Marlins Bottom, it having been about two weeks since he found the upper road across the Greenbrier Valley blocked at Top of Allegheny.

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paign with enthusiasm and he executed his orders with neatness and dispatch. His little army was made up of 400 soldiers from his own regiment. They marched by the Elk water fort and there he picked up 300 men from the Second West Virginia, and at Linwood he was joined by a little troop of 38 of Bracken's cavalry. He had loaded up his supply wagons and the army of 738 men moved south into the country of the rebel angels. He started from Huttonsville, December 31, 1861, at 1 p. m. The road follows the Tygarts Valley River to its head at Mingo, and from there it crosses over the Valley Mountain where it strikes the upper waters of the Dry Branch of Elk, at the postoffice of Mace. The road descends a little along the foot of the great Cheat Mountain whose southern end faces this little valley. The road then climbs again for part of a mile to the gap between Cheat Mountain and Middle Mountain. Then down the long slope by the camp that General Robert E Lee had vacated some months before.

Then down the Big Spring Branch of Elk to the Hugh Sharp place, then across a divide to the waters of Slaty Fork of Elk by L. D. Sharp's store, and then across another divide to the Old Field Fork of Elk, so called from an old Indianfield near Mary's Chapel I remember Dr. Lacy's dilemma when he came to change the name of this chapel, from Saint Mary's Chapel, about the time it was dedicated in 1888 to Mary's Chapel. The original name did not appeal to the old ironsides.

The route lay up the Old Field Fork of Elk for seven or eight miles and when Webster's army reached the place that Crooked Fork of Elk turns to encircle the upper reaches of Gauley River, they found the timber barricade cut into the narrow defile the fall before when Lee's army withdrew from the waters of Elk to the waters of Greenbrier. This barricade was a formidable one for the trees were all cut for more than a mile. I remember it very distinctly. Webster reached this blockade on the evening of January 2nd, and there were so many trees across the pike that he concluded that it would be impossible for him to cut them out so that his wagons could continue to

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Greenbrier. This barricade was a formidable one for the trees were all cut for more than a mile. I remember it very distinctly. Webster reached this blockade on the evening of January 2nd, and there were so many trees across the pike that he concluded that it would be impossible for him to cut them out so that his wagons could continue to go forward without losing too much time. So he parked his wagons there and left a squadron of fifty men to guard them.

He found a path to the left, on J. C. Gay's side of the blockade and he climbed to the top of the mountain in that way, early on the morning of January 3rd.

When Webster got to the top of Elk Mountain on the Gay place he could look down on the valley of the Greenbrier like whatyoumaycallhim looked down on Italy from the Alps. He could see the tents of the winter camp of the company who had started to winter on the Ingen Patch, that part of the city limits now occupied by the Union Tanning Company. Another company (Louisiana) was camped down the river on the west side where the old Price place is. They had cut every tree on the plantation of any size except a walnut and a hickory that the children begged the colonel to spare.

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Marlins Bottom was fortified against invasion from the north. The old pike came up a little hill and dropped down to the bridge head. On top of this hill was a cannon. A part of embankment can still be seen. On the east of the river on the bank was a trench for rifle fire extending the length of the Tannery Row of tenement houses, with another cannon styled where there is now a big oak where the road topped the bank from the Marlin ford. These fortifications commanded the turnpike at a distance of some four hundred yards and made the road extremely dangerous as a passway.

Webster marched his command down Elk Mountain through the loyal village of Edray, across the flats to Drennen's Ridge, and down that ridge into the rebel settlement of Marlins Bottom. At or about the mouth of Stony Creek, a mile above

the bridge, he stopped long enough to send his squad of cavalry across the river at the Gay place, and they galloped down the east bank of the river and came out on the bottom land and to the Huntersville road, firing and acting outrageous, while Webster's infantry came down the west of the road. The cavalry cutting in behind the confederates caused them to stampede and most of them made it across the bridge to the west side and they all fled south and west into the woods. This engagement while a very noisy one resulted in no loss by death or wounding on either side.

And it hardly halted the advance of the federals. They crossed the bridge and advanced on Huntersville, six miles distant, driving before them some mounted confederates. Huntersville was the county seat of Pocahontas county, and was located about four miles from Camp Northwest. It had seen some big armies during the year 1861, and when Lee left everything in charge of Loring,

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Webster had left Captain Johnson with fifty men to guard the wagons at the barricade. So now he left Captain Williams and fifty men to guard Greenbrier Bridge.

When Webster arrived at the ford

T. S. McNeel F. F. McLaughlin

of Knapps Creek at the place where J. H. Buzzard lives he found the confederate calvary on the south side of the creek in a level bottom field with Knapps Creek on one side of them and their line extending up and over a hilly spur that jutted out into the field, the line crossing the turnpike. Webster sent a detachment up the mountain to turn the confederate's right while the rest of his command marched upon their front and the firing became general on both sides. But the confederates perceiving that the federals on the north side of the creek were encircling them, the confederates fell back and formed a new line of battle across the pike and along Cummings Creek near the town. The pickets coming in from Marlins Bottom had reported the federal force to be about five thousand men.

Webster crossed at the ford at J.

bank of the creek, and the rest of the troops advanced forward. After some firing the confederates mounted their horses and retreated to the town, and as the federal troops entered the town from the west side, the confederates left by the the east side.

The number of confederates engaged at Huntersville was about four hundred regular cavalry, several hundred citizens of the county, recruited the day before, and two companies of infantry.

In the meantime, at Camp Allegheny, General Edward Johnson was filled with apprehension. This was the Kentuky general. An old lady told me that his ears flapped when his horse trotted. General Johnson's scouts had reported the forward movement of the federals as being 5000 men, and Johnson figured out that they would circle around by way of Huntersville, Frost, and Crabbottom, and detach him violently from his base, at Monterey.

tersville he found it deserted. Not a soul was living there. The court-house and jail and stores, and houses were all empty. War had come too close to them, and the countyseat and largest town of the county was abandoned by its population. It remained in this condition for most of the war, and the soldiers used the Presbyterian church for a camp, and the houses were abused. Windows were broken and the doors left swinging, and an old timer told me that this the scene of much social life and gaity became one of the dreariest sights that he had ever observed.

A civilian came to the Webster command and told him that the people had moved out and taken their belonging[illegible] confederate general had told them that if his army was beaten, that the town would be burned.

When the town was captured January 3rd, large army supplies were found stored there. There were 350 barrels of flour, 150,000 pounds of beef, 30,000 pounds of [illegible]

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When the town was captured January 3rd, large army supplies were found stored there. There were 350 barrels of flour, 150,000 pounds of beef, 30,000 pounds of salt, and large quantities of sugar, coffee, rice, bacon and clothing.

Not being able to move anything, fire was set to the stores and they were destroyed.

Then Webster turned and marched his men back to his wagons that night in the sleet and driving rain, having fought two engagements, and marched something like twenty-eight miles on foot. That was a big days work. It took an hour and a half to drive the confedates a mile, and he was in Huntersville two hours destroying rebel stores.

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having fought two engagements, and marched something like twenty-eight miles on foot. That was a big days work. It took an hour and a half to drive the confedates a mile, and he was in Huntersville two hours destroying rebel stores.

It is no wonder that the local people did not understand the movements on that day, for the confederate commanders did not know what was happening to them. Webster's return march from Huntersville was what they had not counted on. They went on the basis that a big army was on the move, and looked for it to go almost any way but back. They figured on a march to the White Sulphur Springs. or on the Central Railroad at Millboro, or to Monterey.

But the little federal army marching so jaunty with their young commander had no notion of penetrating farther into the strongholds of the confederacy than any union army had reached up to that time, and he had swept the country clean as he went along and extricated his army with much neatness and dispatch. The 4th and 5th of January, were spent

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But the little federal army marching so jaunty with their young commander had no notion of penetrating farther into the strongholds of the confederacy than any union army had reached up to that time, and he had swept the country clean as he went along and extricated his army with much neatness and dispatch. The 4th and 5th of January, were spent in marching back from the barricade to Elkwater. On the night of the 5th they were in the fortifications at Elkwater, where they were royally entertained by the soldiers at that camp, and on the morning of the 6th they were in their old headquarters at Huttonsville. They had pulled out on a Tuesday and they got back the following Monday, and it was as fine a little campaign as every a set of youngsters put over. Major George Webster, of the 25th Regiment Ohio Volunteers, Commanding Huntersville Expedition, was there and back again, with all his men and

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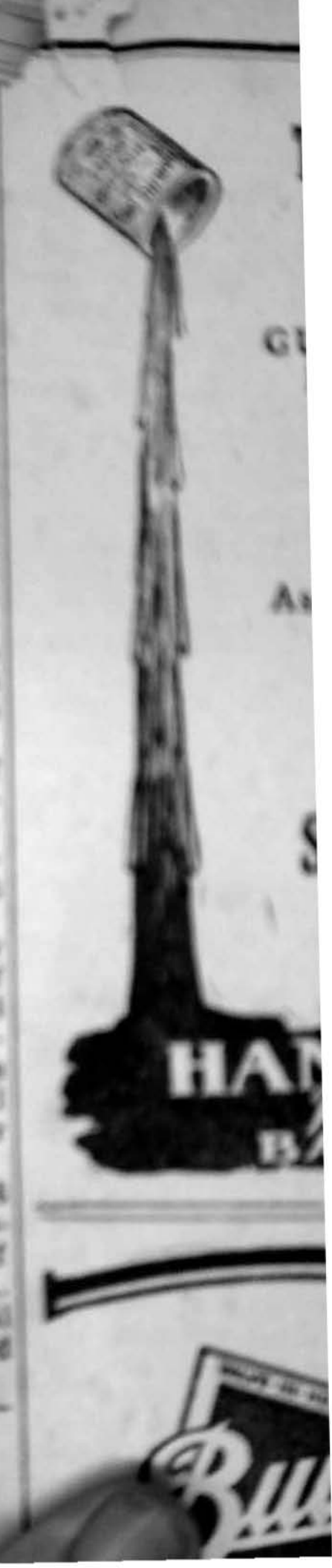
The same week of the Huntersville expedition, Sutton, the countyseat of Braxton, had its awful time. In that town a federal company was stationed under Captain Rowand. The town was attacked by 135 confederates. The federal company retreated to Weston, and the confederates burned the town and took what commissary stores they found there. Col. Crook with four companies went in pursuit of the confederates (claimed to be irregular soldiers) and killed six, and dispersed in them the Glades. On the 30th, Col. Antsanel organized an expedition of two regiments and marched them to the Glades in Webster county and killed twenty-two and burned twenty houses. This was about the time that Webster was operating in Pocahontas.

Before Webster marched out of Huntersville that rainy day, he nailed the Stars and Stripes to the top of the courthouse and left them flying, with their bright colors against the sodden sky.

The terrible experience in Webster county had the effect of a number of its citizens meeting together and organizing the county into an independent state with a governor of its own, whose authority was recognized by a large number of its citizens for some years.

There was another skirmish at Marlins Bottom, April 18, 1864. Captain J. W. Marshall's company, of the 19th Virginia Cavalry, C. S. A. came upon a company of federal soldiers, identity unknown, and chased them north towards Edray.

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